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CURRENT SUPPORT MEMORANDUM

INDICATIONS OF A COMBINED EVACUATION-
SHELTER PLAN IN THE SOVIET BLOC

OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND REPORTS

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

This report represents the immediate views of the
originating intelligence components of the Office
of Research and Reports. Comments are solicited.

CIA HISTORICAL REVIEW PROGRAM
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It is becoming evident that the Soviets are modifying their civil defense system by building sizable underground air defense shelters in areas outside major cities which, in time of war, might logically be considered as targets for atomic or heavier nuclear attack. Confirmation of many of these reports is lacking but such a program, if widespread, would indicate that a serious effort is being made to save important segments of the population by a program combining evacuation and dispersed shelter for defense against aerial attack.

Major General G. Pokrovskiy of the USSR, writing on atomic defense, reportedly made a statement 1/ to the effect that improved defense against atomic weapons might be achieved by removing the population to a distance greater than twice the radius of expected destruction in a target area and placing them in "proper shelter." General Pokrovskiy conceded that the "commonly used type" of air defense shelter might not give sufficient protection against atomic weapons, particularly in case of surface or underground bursts. 2/

Some evidence has been found which leads to the conclusion that such a program may have already been initiated. Atomic bomb shelters are under construction or projected for various cities in Czechoslovakia, 3/ Rumania, 4/ Hungary and the USSR. 5/ To be truly effective, such shelters would have to be located well outside the target area and provided with an air filtration system for protection against radioactive fall-out. In areas remote from large cities, gas-proofing of farm buildings, such as has been described in a Soviet chemical defense manual, 6/ might increase the Soviets' capacity to handle evacuees from large cities.

The clearest pattern of establishing large shelter locations outside of a large Sovbloc city is apparent near Sofia, Bulgaria. One report states that air raid shelters have been completed in seven villages* of the Sofia area with a total estimated capacity of 100,000 persons. 7/ Five additional large underground construction projects in the foothills north or south of Sofia have been reported by other sources. 8/ Two or three locations were the sites of governmental shelters during World War II, but others appear to represent new construction. They are generally located on access roads at distances varying from three to ten miles. (See sketch)

Additional reports suggesting a combined evacuation-shelter plan have been received. In Czechoslovakia, for example, the decision to construct atomic bomb-proof shelters was made in 1952. According to a report, 19,000,000 Czech crowns (\$2,640,000,000) were allocated in 1954 for constructing shelters for the cities of Prague, Plzen, Usti-nad-Labem, Liberec, Decin, Most, Brno, Morovska-Ostrava, Olomouc and Trencin. 9/ One such shelter, constructed in the side of a deep valley northwest of Bratislava,

* Two of these have not been located. Their locations were stated to be Reidut and Pidusna (Sic).

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was to have a planned capacity for 30,000 people. Construction reports in this area have been received. Suburban air raid shelters have also been reported near the cities of Prerov, 10/ Usti-nad-Labem, 11/ Gottwaldov, 12/ and Liberec 13/ in Czechoslovakia.

Suburban shelters in other countries occasionally have been mentioned. Atomic bomb shelters have been constructed "outside but near" Bucharest, Rumania, 14/ and in China, according to a Hong Kong newspaper report, 250 large air raid shelters were constructed in the Shanghai suburbs. 15/ A returning German was told by fellow prisoners in the USSR that they were digging tunnels in the hills near Magadan for use as air raid shelters. 16/

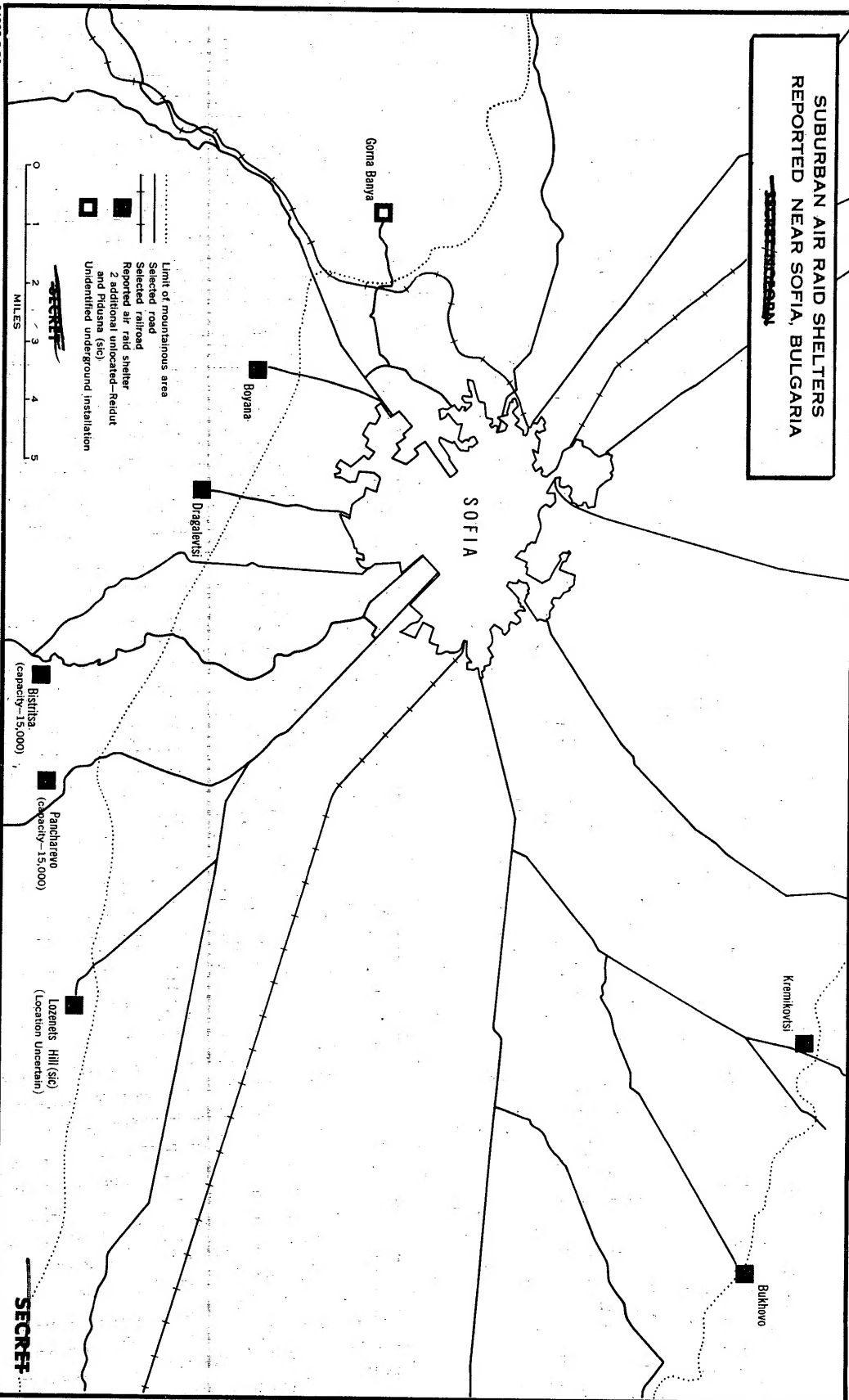
Using shelters outside cities would necessarily involve extensive utilization of transport, particularly motor transport. Organization of motor transport for mobilization has been reported from Czechoslovakia. 17/ This may, of course, be related to military preparations only, however, driver training has been accentuated during the past two years in connection with all the Sovbloc paramilitary bodies. These organizations, heavily involved in civil defense training, would logically be the recruiting ground for auxiliary civil defense personnel needed to implement and control any evacuation movement. Reports have been received of planned evacuation in Czechoslovakia 18/ and Poland, 19/ but these are unconfirmed and the extent of evacuation undefined.

Formerly reported civil defense preparations in the Soviet Bloc have not been connected with a dispersal program. Civil defense construction has largely been limited to shelter building in cities and factories. The extent of this new preparation for evacuation in the case of air attack cannot be demonstrated at present. Theoretical pronouncements, transport preparations, reports of heavy underground shelter in the environs of Sovbloc cities, and rumors of an evacuation scheme, following the testing of hydrogen weapons are too timely to be disregarded. It must be concluded, therefore, that additional civil defense preparations are being made because of the untenability of major cities in the event of nuclear attack. Dispersal and shelter will undoubtedly be utilized, first of all, to preserve the essential elements of control, the Party, government and security forces.

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SUBURBAN AIR RAID SHELTERS REPORTED NEAR SOFIA, BULGARIA

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Analyst:

Coord:

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